

REMARKS

On page 3, paragraph 8, the Examiner states that dependent claim 2 (2/1) would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant has canceled claim 2 and inserted its limitation into claim 1, whereby the amended claim 1 now should be **allowable** along with its dependent claims 3 and 4. (Applicant expressly reserves the right further to prosecute the unamended claims 1, 3 and 4 in a continuing application.)

As a result of the above amendment, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 103(a) have been rendered **moot**.

Applicant has also added the following three new dependent claims: 23 (23/1) which finds support in Applicant's specification at page 14, line 11; 24 (24/1) which finds support in Applicant's specification at page 13, line 13; and 25 (25/24) which finds support in Applicant's specification at page 13, line 14. Since the new claims 23-25 are either directly or indirectly dependent on the now allowable claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 23-25 also are **allowable**.

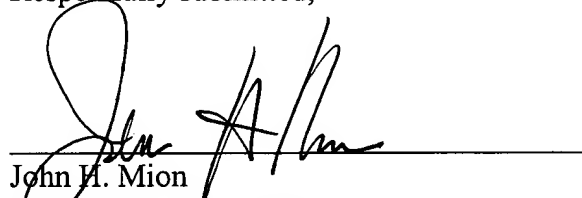
Since claims 16-22 already have been **allowed**, Applicant respectfully submits that the application now is in condition for allowance with all of **claims 1, 3, 4 and 16-22**; however, if the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to **call the undersigned attorney** to discuss any unresolved issues and to expedite the disposition of the application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this application, and any required fee for such extension is to be charged to

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLN. NO. 09/777,686

Deposit Account No. 19-4880. The Commissioner is also authorized to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and/or § 1.17 necessary to keep this application pending in the Patent and Trademark Office or credit any overpayment to said Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

Respectfully submitted,



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